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Weinberger Is Said to Insist on Picking His Deputy

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 8 — Caspar W. Weinberger, the prospective Secretary of Defense, has informed Ronald Reagan that he will not serve in the Cabinet unless he is permitted to name his own deputy, according to insiders on the transition team.

The sources said that Mr. Weinberger had passed that message to Mr. Reagan through the President-elect's so-called kitchen cabinet in California and that Mr. Weinberger had insisted on naming Frank C. Carlucci, a longtime associate, as Deputy Secretary of Defense, despite objections that he lacked experience in military matters.

So far, Mr. Weinberger appears to have prevailed. Mr. Carlucci, who has been Deputy Director of Central Intelligence in the Carter Administration, has been working at the Pentagon alongside Mr. Weinberger in recent days. But no formal announcement of his appointment has been made.

The conflict over Mr. Carlucci appears to be a focal point in a wider struggle for control of the Defense Department that has split the ranks of the Reagan camp. On one side is Mr. Weinberger; on the other are such longtime Reagan advisers on defense as William E. Van Cleave, who headed the Pentagon transition team until Mr. Weinberger dismantled it.

Struggle Over Military Budget

A major issue is who will get control of the military budget and programs, which is critical to establishing the new administration's military policy.

After Mr. Reagan's election victory in November, his advisers on national security asserted that the State and Defense Departments and other elements of the national security apparatus would be staffed by "Reaganauts," their term for loyalists. That meant that the agency heads would be required to select their principal subordinates from lists prepared by the transition headquarters or to have their own proposals approved by Mr. Reagan's senior advisers.

When Mr. Weinberger said that he wanted to name Mr. Carlucci, there were protests from such conservatives on Capitol Hill as Senator Jesse Helms, Republican of North Carolina, and from the conservative group of informal Reagan advisers known as the kitchen cabinet.

They contended that Mr. Carlucci, who had served under Mr. Weinberger at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in the Nixon Administration, was primarily a manager, not a defense specialist, and that he had helped weaken the Central Intelligence Agency in the Carter Administration by closing down some covert operations. But Mr. Weinberger, the insiders said, insisted on having his way and was likely to do so on other appointments within the Department of Defense.

The rift began shortly after Mr. Weinberger was nominated in mid-December, when he told the Pentagon transition team, headed by Mr. Van Cleave, to complete its work by the end of the year.